



Message of the Week

January 29-February 4, 2003

Presented by Rep. Mike Pence (R-IN)

“As outlaw regimes continue to threaten America and its allies, now is the time to steel our resolve and America’s military.”

- In the State of the Union Address this week, President Bush made a compelling case for continuing and accelerating the war on terrorism. “There’s never a day when I do not learn of another threat,” he said, “or receive reports of operations in progress, or give an order in this global war against a scattered network of killers.”
- America and its allies have been successful in fighting terrorism thus far:
 - More than 3000 suspected terrorists have been arrested around the world, and many more have been killed.
 - Terrorist conspiracies have been thwarted in Yemen, Singapore, Saudi Arabia, and on the high seas.
 - Al Qaeda cells have been broken in Hamburg, Milan, Madrid, London, Paris, and Buffalo, NY.
- Yet the gravest dangers facing America remain the chemical, biological, nuclear, and other mass attacks threatened by outlaw regimes:
 - Iran and North Korea, for example, continue to pursue weapons of mass destruction, all while oppressing their own people and supporting terrorism worldwide.
 - In 1999, the United Nations concluded that Iraq has materials sufficient to produce at least 25,000 liters of anthrax, 38,000 liters of botulinum toxin, 500 tons of nerve agents, and upwards of 30,000 munitions capable of delivering chemical agents. Yet Iraq fails to account for these materials or give any evidence that he has destroyed them.
- Despite these frightening realities, America remains grossly under-prepared to defend itself and its allies. Consider these facts:
 - In 1990, America had 18 active Army divisions; now we have just ten. (To put this in perspective, it took nine divisions to fight the Gulf War in 1991.)
 - In 1990, America had 546 Navy battle force ships; now we have just 310.
 - In 1990, America had 36 Air Force fighter wings (active and reserve); now we have just 20.
 - Since 1987, active duty forces across the military (including full time Guard and reserves) have been reduced by over 35%.
 - Readiness training is routinely curtailed or eliminated because of environmental regulations protecting woodpeckers, snail darters, and rare plants.
- To reverse these outrages and to protect against the growing threats worldwide, RSC Members propose:

- Sharply increasing defense spending to modernize all five branches of the military;
 - Modifying or repealing dangerous anti-readiness laws and regulations (such as the Endangered Species Act); and
 - Deploying a national missile defense system.
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- Conservatives agree with President Bush that terrorists and rogue regimes will not give polite warning when they are about to attack or support an attack. That is why America must prepare a vigorous defense now—in **advance** of any attack.
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- President Bush was right when he said, “The course of this nation does not depend on the decisions of others.” We conservatives stand behind our Commander-in-Chief in doing whatever it takes to meet and overcome the violent threats from those who despise freedom and relish in the deaths of Americans.

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